



Communicating and Using the Rule of Three

Ever heard the phrase, “*Truth, Justice and the American Way?*”

What about:

Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness

Faster, Higher, Stronger

Location, Location, Location

Stop, Drop and Roll



Each phrase probably sounds at least somewhat familiar. That's because they're all great examples of something called the “Rule of Three,” otherwise known in communication circles as a speechwriting technique that allows the writer to highlight important points (concisely). The main benefit to working with the Rule of Three is that it offers a useful structure that's easily remembered.

Of course, this kind of thing can also be done with more than three points. Take Professor Henry Higgins' helpful mnemonic for Eliza Doolittle in “My Fair Lady: “*The rain in Spain stays mainly in the plain.*” It's the same general principle: Make it memorable. If you're looking to share knowledge and want people to remember, three's the magic number; you'll remember the points better and so will your audience. That's the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. (*See what I did there?*)

Your talking points should be concise, they should capture the main ideas and they should consider just how familiar the audience is with your topic. More to the point, speakers communicating with speeches and presentations using the Rule of Three are generally more memorable and impactful.

What's the big deal? Why does this even matter? Well, considering GSA's expertise on everything from technology to real estate and finance and more, a basic way to ensure our presenters are clearly delivering information is to develop talking points. Talking points are helpful in preparing for speeches, media interviews, digital and social media posts and any other place where it's important to share information and for it to be remembered by the audience.

The Office of Strategic Communication works with all our business-line partners across GSA to determine the most effective communications strategy to meet the business goals of each client office. If your office submits frequently to the Event Tracker, OSC encourages you to connect with your client team ahead of time to find out more about how to develop well-organized and effective talking points that cover core messages (and, yes, there IS a difference!)

This is the first of a three-part series on communicating with focus. For more information about the Office of Strategic Communication and its Client Teams, visit GSA InSite.



“You’d like me to talk about what, when?”

*What To Say and
How To Say It*

General Services Administration

Office of Strategic Communication

May 2018

For internal use only

<http://vimeo.com/32207413>



What Can You Expect?

- Increase your understanding of the communication process.
 - Increase your comfort level.
 - Give you a few tips and tricks!
-

Practice

Baseline read through

Get Started



Who? Spokesperson

“CEOs are important but not sufficient voices for their companies, as engagement is created by mid-level employees with serious knowledge of products and less perceived bias to exaggeration.”

- Richard Edelman

What?

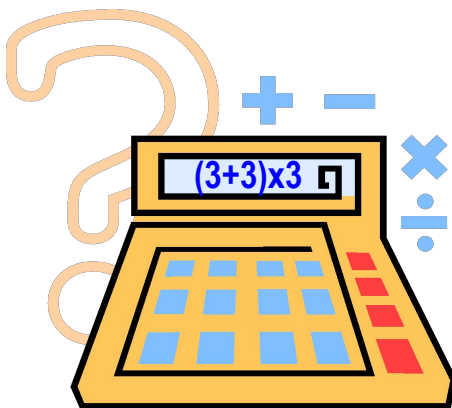
Developing Key Messages

- What's the issue?
- What does your audience want?
- What does the audience need to know?
- What story do you want to tell?
- Follow-on questions?

Note: Public Affairs/Office of Strategic Communications is your resource

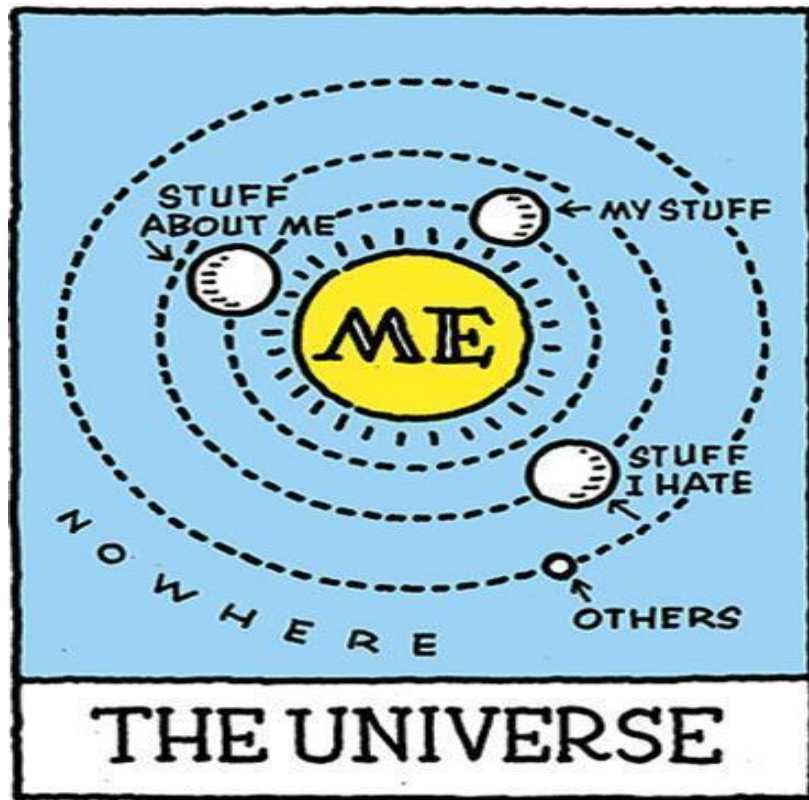
GSA

Messages: The Basics



DO

- Make it short, concise, focused
 - Audience appropriate
 - Level, language
- Cut to the chase
- Create info in threes
 - 3 key points (messages)
 - 3-4 supporting points
 - Repeat about 3 times
- Give action steps
- Use personal pronouns



Messages: The Basics

DON'T

- Use technical jargon
- Use condescending or judgmental phrases
- Attack the problem, person or organization
- Promise
- Speculate
- Use Humor



Frame Your Issue

- Define the problem
 - How do you want the solution to be discussed?
 - How to present what you do?
 - Weave your messages around each other
 - Repetition, repetition, repetition
 - An interview or presentation isn't a conversation
-

Headlining & Take aways

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| ● Use an inverted pyramid <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Conclusion first | What do you want listeners to: |
| ● Proof points next <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Discuss science/ methodology | ● Think about |
| | ● Feel regarding topic |
| | ● Do about what they've heard |
-

For whom? Target Audience

- What is the point of the engagement?
 - What does audience want to hear
 - What do they need to know
 - What story do you have to share



NUANCES

- Print
- Television
- Radio
- Trade
- Online
- Community engagement
- Industry events
- Seminars and webinars

Communicating the Message



Communicating the Message

Word Choice
Voice Tone
Body Language

Communicating the Message

Word Choice – 7%

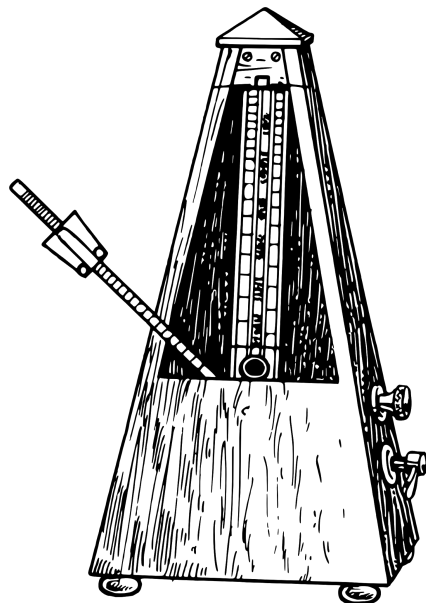
Voice Tone – 38%

Body Language – 55%

Voice Tone

- Inflection
- Feeling
- Pause
- Change of Pitch
- Change of Tempo

<https://youtu.be/SCNIBV87wV4>



Word choice

- Calibrate your style to the occasion
 - Casual vs Formal
 - Technical vs Plain language
 - Good news vs Bad News
 - Energize vs calming
- Show your expertise and passion

Practice, practice, practice!

What Makes a Good News Story?

- Anecdotes and stories!
 - Something unusual, unexpected (man bites dog)
 - First of its kind
 - Ground-breaking (new process for doing something/ saving taxpayer dollars)
 - Part of a trend (i.e. anything sustainable, using technology to speed up a process, replacing fuel powered cars with electric ones, etc.)
 - Topical (part of on already on-going news story: Elections, Olympics, etc.)
-

“Know what you want to say and use whatever questions you are asked to say it. Briefly, along the way, you can actually address the questions put to you or not, as you choose....

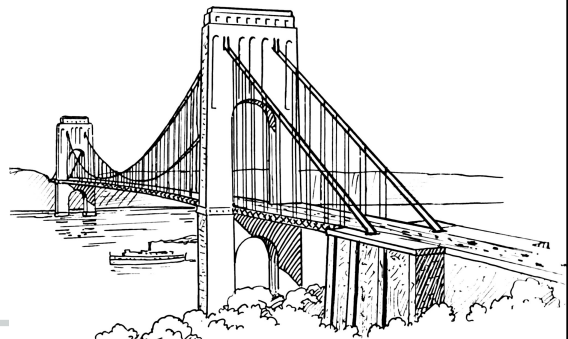
Just don't get so fixated by the questions you are asked that you forget to make your points.”

MacNeil's Motto
MacNeil/Lehrer NewsHour



Blocking/Bridging

- **What is blocking/bridging/flagging?**
 - Use smooth connecting phrases to move the conversation from an unproductive, hostile, or irrelevant area back to your message points
- Staying on track
- Transitioning
- Flagging
- Useful phrases



Bridging Examples

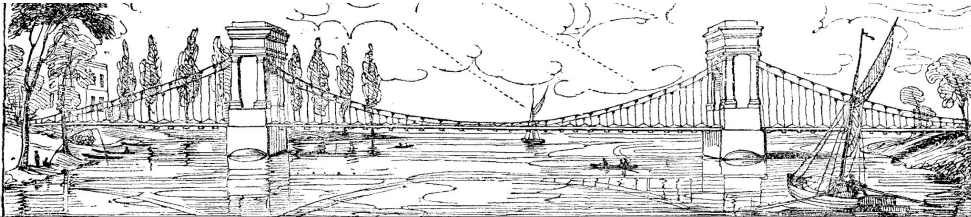
- “What’s most important to know is...”
 - “However, what is more important to look at is...”
 - “What this all means is...”
 - “What’s most important to remember is ...”
 - “With this in mind, if we look at the bigger picture...”
 - “With this in mind, if we take a look back...”
 - “If we take a broader perspective, ...”
 - “Let me put all this in perspective by saying...”
 - “Before we continue, let me emphasize that...”
-

Bridging Examples

- “This is an important point because...”
 - “The heart of the matter is...”
 - “What matters most in this situation is...”
 - “Let me just add to this that...”
 - “Let me emphasize again...”
 - “Before we leave the subject, let me add that...”
 - “And that reminds me...”
 - “Here’s the real issue...”
 - “While...is important, it is also important to remember...”
-

Bridging Examples

- “Before I get to the heart of the question, let me give you some background that will be useful in understanding what is really going on ...”
- “You have asked a legal question and you'll need to speak to a lawyer about that; but what I can tell you is ... ”
- “As much as I'd like to help you, that would be breaking confidentiality but on a broader level this is what we do in the process at that stage ... (give a generic example)”



Common Questions

- “Where do I look?”
- “Where do I stand?”
- “What do I do with my hands?”



YOU Are the Messenger

- Be expressive; maintain positive attitude; don't lose temper or show frustration
- Relax and be yourself
- Keep eye contact
- Appropriate hand gestures are good
(but watch where you put your hands)

Reporters in the Room

- When accepting speaking engagements ask if it is open to media
 - Talk to the primary audience but be aware of media
 - Don't give interviews on the fly - schedule in advance or later
 - You are never off the record
-

Tips and Pointers

Nevers

- Never go “off the record”
 - Never say, “No comment”
 - Never guess
 - Never ad lib
 - Never lie
 - Never argue
 - Never be flippant/Joke
 - Comment about a reporter
-

Live at an Event

- Speak slowly and clearly enough
 - Know the topic and your message
 - Words and anecdotes paint the picture
 - Keep the high road and don't lose your temper - Stay calm at all times
 - STICK TO YOUR POINTS, Keep it simple
-

Live at an event, continued

- Turn off distractions before starting the interview
 - Careful of hot mic comments, assume your conversation may be reported on
 - Remember – you never know when a reporter is nearby and can hear you
 - If approached by a reporter, refer request to your press office or public affairs officer
-

What to Wear

- Dress for the audience
 - Straighten your clothes before interview begins
 - Best colors - avoid distracting patterns, stripes and bright colors. If it's in a green screen, it's best to avoid all green, be it bright, olive, moss or khaki, patterns
 - Best clothes - wear clothes that are neat, clean and comfortable. This is Washington and you are representing a government agency, so be somewhat conservative. Try to match your wardrobe with your role.
 - Hair: Men - make sure that any facial hair is trimmed, comb your hair. For women and men: if your hair is long, pull it back, especially if it is an outdoor interview.
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Common Pitfalls



How Can We Help?

- Experienced media professional
- Provide research/support
- Manage interview/reporter expectations
- Set you up for a successful interview

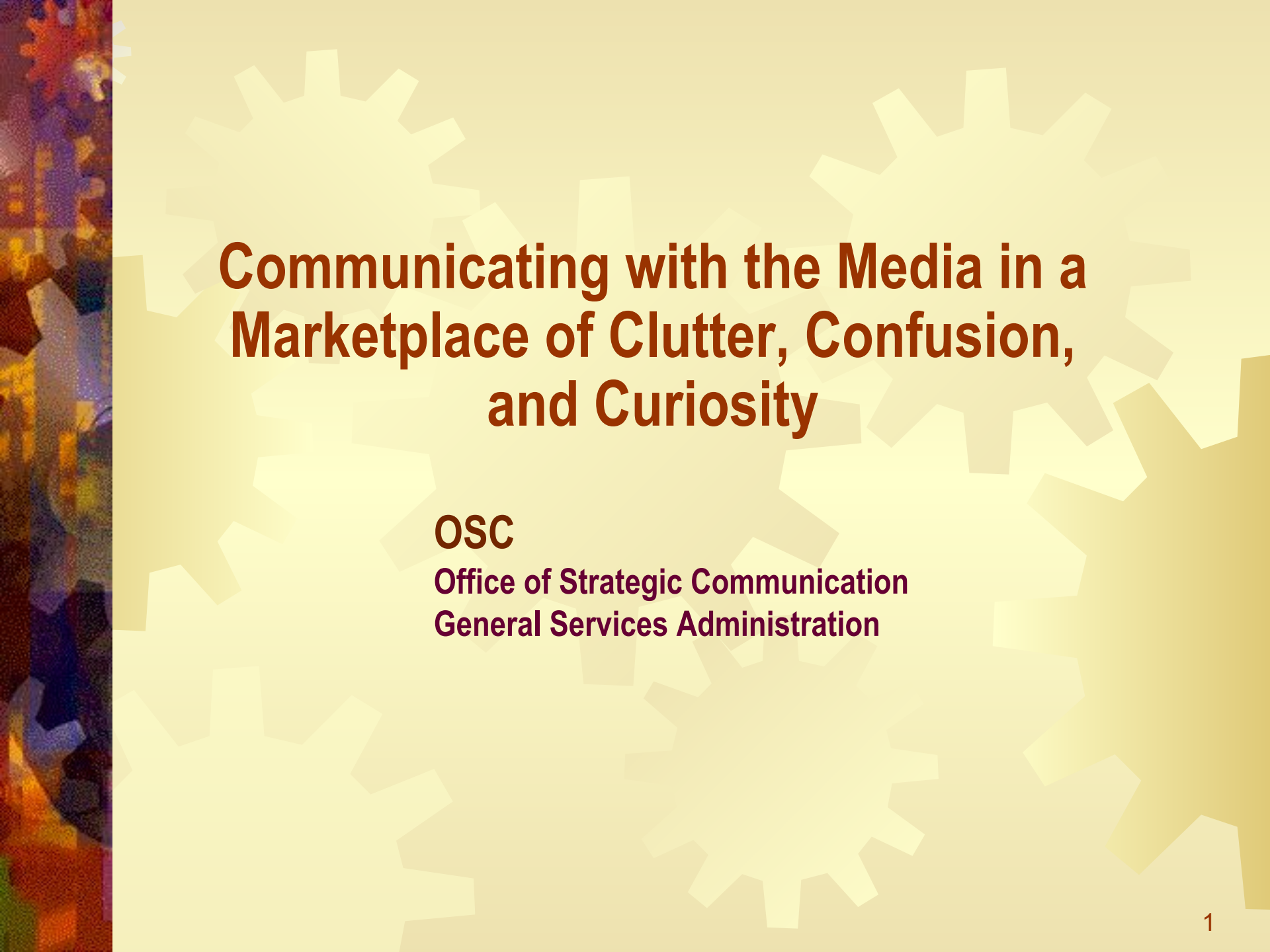


Practice

Run through

Q&A

Review



Communicating with the Media in a Marketplace of Clutter, Confusion, and Curiosity

OSC

**Office of Strategic Communication
General Services Administration**

What Do Media Want to Know?

- ✱ What happened?
- ✱ Who is in charge?
- ✱ Has this been addressed?
- ✱ What can we expect?
- ✱ What should people do?
- ✱ What are you doing?
- ✱ Did you have forewarning?

Lights, Camera, Action

“The safest course of action is to assume that all you say to a reporter will end up in the newspaper, especially...before you know the reporters you are working with and are confident in who will accept the terms of the agreement.”

Former White House spokesperson,
Dee Dee Myers

Speaking to the Media

- ✿ On the record - Everything is quotable and attributed to you
- ✿ On background - Attribution is negotiated.
Ex: GSA spokeswoman or GSA spokesperson
- ✿ Off the record - Remember: Nothing is off the record. Be careful and thoughtful of what you say in interviews, emails and public settings.

The background features a light beige field with several large, semi-transparent interlocking gears in shades of cream and pale yellow. On the far left, a vertical strip contains a colorful, abstract, and pixelated pattern in hues of red, orange, yellow, and purple.

Video baseline



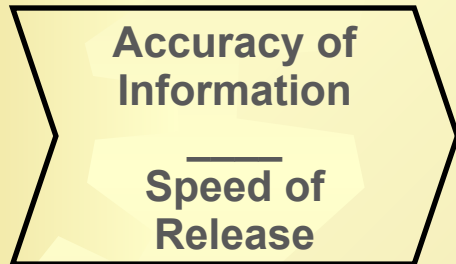
Writing Key Messages

Humans have shorter attention span than goldfish. The average human attention span has fallen from 12 seconds in 2000, or around the time the mobile revolution began, to eight seconds.



Fast, Concise, Effective

✱ Elements of Successful Communication

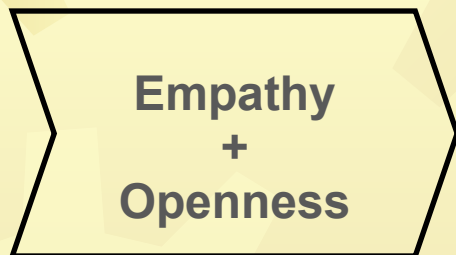


CREDIBILITY

+

=

**Successful
Communication**

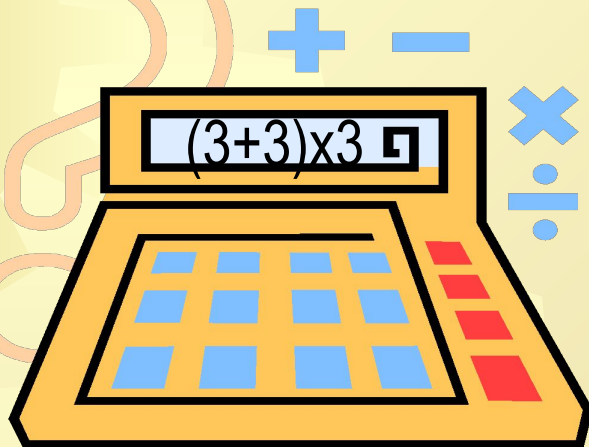


TRUST

Messages: The Basics

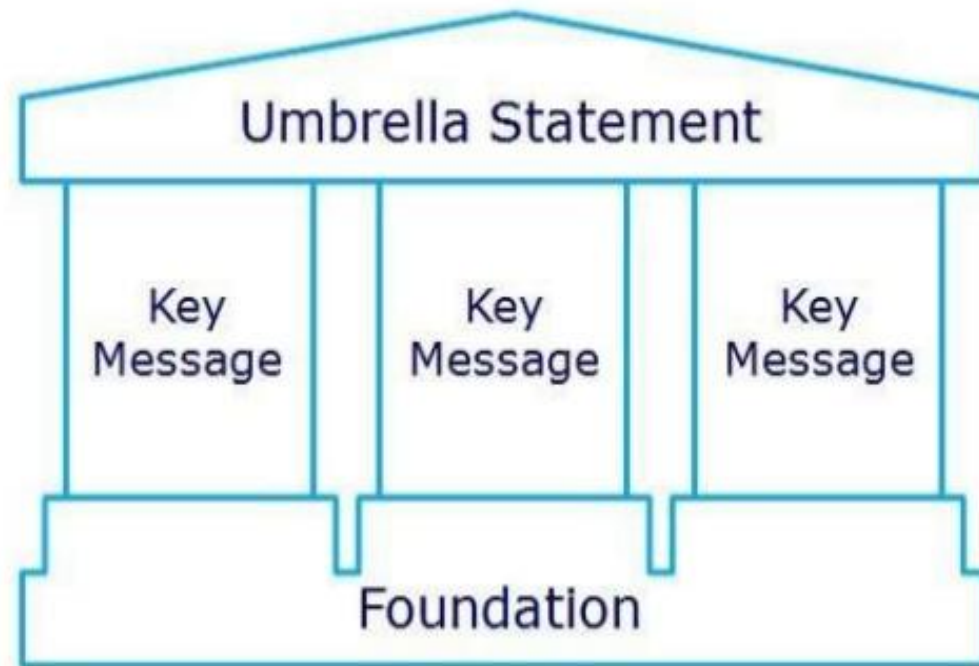
DO

- ✱ Make it short, concise and focused
 - Identify your audience
- ✱ Cut to the chase
- ✱ Create info in threes
 - 3 key points (messages)
 - 3-4 supporting points



Creating Your Message

The message house



Messages: The Basics



DON'T

- ✱ Use technical jargon
- ✱ Use condescending or judgmental phrases
- ✱ Attack the problem, person or organization
- ✱ Promise
- ✱ Speculate
- ✱ Share non-public information (often money)
- ✱ Use Humor

You Have to Prove It!

Hard Proof

Statistics

Trends

Graphs

Charts

Percentages

Soft Proof


Human stories

Personal angle

Success stories

Triumph

Tragedies

The background features a light beige field with several interlocking gears in various shades of cream and pale yellow. On the far left, there is a vertical strip of colorful, abstract, and textured patterns in shades of red, orange, purple, and blue.

Sharing Your Message

Transition phrases

- ✱ Let's not talk about hypotheticals / We don't deal in hypotheticals...
- ✱ Before I forget, I think the audience would want to know that...
- ✱ That's not my area of expertise, but what I can tell you is...

Useful Terminology

Instead of.....**try**.....

- ❑ Work with the Trump Administration → ***Work for the Trump Administration***
- ❑ To paraphrase the statement → ***The essence of our statement says***
- ❑ As you may know → ***That's a good question***.....

Stay Away From

- ☐ “As you may know”
- ☐ “At least not yet”
- ☐ Obama administration
- ☐ Personal opinions
- ☐ “Absolutely”
- ☐ Repeating the reporter’s words

If You Catch Yourself Rambling

- ❑ I could talk about this all day, but the thing I want you/your viewers to remember is...
- ❑ This is a complicated topic. Three things you should know are...

**Remember: It's ok to stop yourself -
pause - reboot**

Television Nuts and Bolts

The Public Affairs Officer or Press Secretary will ask technical questions like:

- Will this be a live or recorded interview (for radio and TV), studio/indoor/outdoor?
- If it's a studio, is it a green screen, is it a remote interview?
- Each of these components will require certain preparation.

Key Points to Remember

- ✱ Keep answers short and concise
- ✱ What is the message you want to them to walk away with?
- ✱ Repeat or reference the question
- ✱ Don't repeat the negative part of the question
- ✱ Think about pace - watch the speed of your answers.
- ✱ When getting into technical information, slow it down.
- ✱ Know your key messages well. Practice! Practice! Practice!
- ✱ Always have a close in mind and take any opportunity to deliver it

Body Language

- ✱ When you walk into the room – be yourself but compose your posture
- ✱ Maintain eye contact - clarity of message will help with roaming eye contact.
- ✱ When sitting during an interview, sit up and lean forward slightly when you talk to open up your diaphragm, increase your air supply, it prevents you from slumping and makes you look engaged in the discussion.
- ✱ Keep gestures in the torso region.

Radio/Podcast Interview Tips

- ★ Your voice is your image -- make it expressive, not overly dramatic
- ★ Words and anecdotes paint the picture
- ★ Keep the high road during an interview and don't lose your temper
- ★ Turn off distractions before starting the interview
- ★ Telephone interviews can be difficult because of the lack of non-verbal feedback
- ★ You can have notes, be prepared

Print or Online Interview Tips

- ✱ Expect to discuss the subject more in-depth
- ✱ Continue to restate your messages
- ✱ Be prepared -- you can have notes
- ✱ If you've misstated a fact, correct it as quickly as possible
- ✱ Don't expect to be able to review the story before hand

Live at an Event

- ✱ Speak slowly and clearly enough
- ✱ Know the topic and your message
- ✱ Remember – you never know when a reporter is nearby and can hear you
- ✱ Careful of hot mic comments, assume your conversation may be reported on
- ✱ **STICK TO YOUR POINTS**, Keep it simple

What to Wear

- ✱ Dress for the audience
- ✱ Straighten your clothes before interview begins
- ✱ Best colors - avoid distracting patterns, stripes and bright colors. If it's in a green screen, it's best to avoid all green, be it bright, olive, moss or khaki, patterns,
- ✱ Best clothes - wear clothes that are neat, clean and comfortable. This is Washington and you are representing a government agency, so be somewhat conservative. Try to match your wardrobe with your role.
- ✱ Hair: Men - make sure that any facial hair is trimmed, comb your hair. For women and men: if your hair is long, pull it back, especially if it is an outdoor interview.
- ✱ You don't want the wind blowing your hair be the subject of the interview.

Final Tips for Interviews



The background features a light beige field with several large, faint, interlocking gears. On the far left, there is a vertical strip of colorful, abstract, and pixelated patterns in shades of red, orange, yellow, and blue.

Video comparison

Quick Do's and Don'ts

DO

- * Clarify key messages
- * Tell the truth
- * Use plain language
- * Stick to what you know
- * Be positive
- * Use active verbs
- * Use simple sentence structure
- * Use contractions
- * "Put a period on it"

DON'T

- * Speculate
- * Say "no comment"
- * Use jargon or complex terminology
- * Fill silence
- * Repeat a negative or an accusation
- * Criticize
- * Engage in debate
- * Boldly go where no interviewee has gone before

How to Work with the Office of Strategic Communication

During the Presidential Transition

These Office of Strategic Communication political appointees' terms ended on January 20, 2017:

- Brett Prather, Associate Administrator
- Teresa Wykpisz-Lee, Deputy Associate Administrator, Media Affairs
- Walter Nicholson, Senior Adviser
- Ashley Nash-Hahn, Press Secretary
- Kelly Paisley, Office of the Administrator Client Team/Public Engagement

Please refer to the information below for our work plan for specific streams during the presidential transition. In addition, our technology liaison in the Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs, Gia Rivera, is a political appointee and has transitioned her responsibilities in this area to Matt Cornelius.

Media

Send all **media inquiries and interview requests** to press@gsa.gov. (Note that media@gsa.gov was shut down on December 15, 2016.)

Matt Burrell will manage press (including staffing interviews) for Rob Cook, Dave Zvenyach and David Shive; Kristen DiReda will manage TTS and GSA IT staff-level press. Lachesha Fikes will manage GSA social media.

Blogs

Until otherwise notified, continue to send **blog review requests** to drew.jack@gsa.gov. Drew will work with Donna Garland to make sure these are reviewed with the agency's new acting leadership and the new administration's White House liaisons.

Matt Burrell and Cat Langel will continue to edit The GSABlog.

Public Engagement

After you have followed GSA's event and your organization's speaker approval processes, send requests for **clearances to participate in public speaking engagements** to drew.jack@gsa.gov. Drew will flag our press office for clearance and our congressional affairs office for information purposes, as needed. Be sure to seek clearance from our general counsel when you have questions about ethics, an

author or event organizer's use of your official position or title, or appearances of vendor endorsement.

[As much as possible, allow two weeks advance notice for clearances and preparation. These requests should come with approval from your organization's leadership and chief of staff. Please include the host or organizer, event topic, your top-line talking points, when and where the event will be held, whether it is open/closed press or if you are being asked to do an interview at the event, and whether any part of it will be broadcast, live streamed or recorded for posting.]

The resource for best practices around public engagement is Ningrum Spicer. We definitely need to involve her when anyone from TTS or GSA IT is **speaking as a surrogate for the administrator**. We should also work with her when we are ready to start proactively pitching TTS and GSA IT participation in public and industry events.

All Other Requests

Please initiate **all other requests for specific services** to the Technology Client Team [intake form](#) or email our shared inbox tex@gsa.gov for general inquiries.

[More on how the Technology Client Team can help >](#)

Introducing the Technology Client Team

The Office of Strategic Communication is a strategic partner supporting the agency's highest priorities through effective and continuously improved communication. Our Technology Client Team primarily supports TTS and its component offices, GSA IT and the OGP Office of Information, Integrity and Access. We are [Drew Jack](#), [Amanda Dean](#) and [Ruven Ortiz](#). We work with our media affairs and digital and visual communication teams, as well as our congressional affairs office and legal counsel, to provide a full complement of strategic communication services.

How We Can Help

Strategic communication comprises internal communication and employee engagement, external communication and stakeholder (including industry) engagement, traditional and social media, and public engagement and events. We exist to support strategy and plan development, content creation and tactical implementation in any of these areas where TTS, GSA IT and OGP need support.

Call on us for support with:

- Communication strategy and plan development
- Communication solutions/messaging/talking points
- Media strategy and relations including inquiries and interview requests
- Clearances and preparation for speaking engagements
- Product and site launches (or freezes and service discontinuations)
- Written content review or creation of any kind
- Creative production of visual content/graphic design/video

To initiate these services, please submit a request via our [intake form](#) or email our shared inbox tex@gsa.gov.

Who to Contact for What

Send all **media inquiries and interview requests** to press@gsa.gov. (Note that media@gsa.gov was shut down on December 15, 2016.)

Until otherwise notified, continue to send **proactive external communication review requests** to drew.jack@gsa.gov. Drew will work with Donna Garland to make sure these are reviewed with the agency's new acting leadership and the new administration's White House liaisons. These include press releases, invitations to speak publicly on behalf of GSA in an official capacity particularly when there will be media engagement (open to press, sponsored by a media outlet), blog posts and social media support.

Send requests for **clearances to participate in public speaking engagements** where someone is speaking on behalf of GSA in an official capacity to drew.jack@gsa.gov. As much as possible, allow two weeks advance notice for clearances and preparation. These requests should come with approval from your organization's leadership (speaker's supervisor) and knowledge of your chief of staff. Please include the host or organizer, event topic, your top-line talking points, when and where the event will be held, whether it is open/closed press or if you are being asked to do an interview at the event, and whether any part of it will be broadcast, live streamed or recorded for posting.

Please initiate **all other requests for specific services** to our [intake form](#) or email our shared inbox tex@gsa.gov for general inquiries.

[More on our presidential transition staff plan >](#)

Meet the Staff



Drew Jack is detailed as the acting lead of the Technology Client Team. Drew comes to this team from the Acquisition Client Team, where he most recently developed plans and created content and campaigns to support user adoption of the [Acquisition Gateway](#). In this work, he gained experience applying an agile approach to communication. He also supported branding and communication efforts for the government-wide category management initiative and the FAS common acquisition platform. Drew's career at GSA spans more than two decades of launching new offices, events and communication channels and of providing marketing, business development and communication support to national and regional programs. He lives and works in San Diego, where he is a 2015 graduate of the [LEAD San Diego IMPACT](#) program.



Amanda Dean is a project and content manager working with the Technology Client Team. Amanda joined teX from the Enterprise Web Management group, where she worked closely with customers to develop, edit, and post program content and coordinate strategic campaigns. She managed the curriculum and development of Drupal CMP training when the agency migrated systems in late 2016, and continues to stay involved with the development of new content managers. Amanda came to GSA from private industry in 2009 as a Management Intern, gaining valuable experience across our organizations in areas ranging from program management to building management. Previous career highlights include leading placemaking activities for the Good Neighbor Program, spearheading programming for the NCR Green Guild, and coordinating federal projects through the National Capital Planning Commission and DC Commission of Fine Arts. Amanda enjoys problem solving, learning, and connecting the dots--making the move to teX a fun and exciting one.



Ruven Ortiz is a member of the Technology Client Team. He is multidisciplinary with a diverse set of academic credentials that include a master's degree in management, a degree in broadcast journalism, a minor in computer

information systems and an associate certification in project management. Ruven is located in Kansas City where he has written hundreds of articles for regional and national audiences. He has years of experience editing web pages on Insite and GSA.gov. He edits the main [GSA.gov](#) page and currently updates GSA's Vision pages. Ruven has written, shot and edited videos for GSA's YouTube and internal communication.

Here are some examples:

- [GSA's Region 6 community outreach efforts](#) near the former Hardesty Federal Complex in Kansas City, Mo.
- [Internationally acclaimed artist Anne Lindberg has designed a four-story glass piece entitled "Curtain Wall"](#) installed at the Richard Bolling Federal Building in Kansas City, MO as part of GSA's Art in Architecture Program.

"We have multitude of ways to address communication needs including written articles, video, and photography," says Ortiz. "I have passion for managing projects and informing the public of the great work that federal servants are doing on behalf of America."

Media Relations



November 15, 2017

Media relations

- Media relations is vital to carry our messages to mass audiences by way of mainstream media.
- The messages go through the filter of a reporter, so taking some risks to communicate through mainstream media.
- High visibility = high risk
- Could be great reward or great mistake

Postures

- Active: Push info out in form of news releases and media advisories
- Passive: Response to query only

Know journalists' jobs

- TV reporters: Need visuals and sounds (stay quiet when they're filming, don't cast shadows or get in their shot, make room for tripods, mic a podium or source, etc.)
- Print reporters: Need quotes that express what can't be seen or heard through multimedia storytelling (voice recorders, notebooks, phone, etc.)
- Ask for their deadline and try to meet it as often as possible.

Interview techniques

- Attribution as a spokesperson:
 - Off the record
 - On deep background
 - On background
 - On the record, for attribution
- Bridging
- Avoid “no comment”

Communication with Focus:

Message Mapping

“I’ve got to say *something*, but where do I start?”

A basic way to ensure clear delivery of information is to develop talking points. Message mapping will help you create those talking points - it is a literal and figurative way to “collect your thoughts.” Message mapping simplifies complex information to make it easier to communicate. This tool can help prepare for speeches, media interviews, digital and social media posts, and any other place where it is important to share information.

Message maps can help:

- 1. Articulate clear, credible messages about the topic.
- 2. Align everyone charged with communication around common information.
- 3. Validate the concept or direction and identify gaps.

Develop the messages – step-by-step process

Start alone or with a group. Consult with those who know the topic, will be communicating the information and who know your audience(s).

- **Identify vulnerabilities/issues-** Consider the issues or topics to be addressed and plan to develop a message map for each one. These topics/issues yield the Single Overriding Communication Objective (SOCO) or headline. As the key and supporting messages are developed it may be necessary to combine message maps as issues or topics are inter-related.

Basic talking point table

SOCO: Single Overriding/Overarching Communication Objective – what is the MAIN point you want people to carry away?; “Headline”		
Key Message 1 (most important/ highest priority message to communicate)	Key Message 2 (not as important; people most remember the 1 st and last primary points)	Key Message 3 (closing or summation message)
Supporting point 1.1	Supporting point 2.1	Supporting point 3.1
Supporting point 1.2	Supporting point 2.2	Supporting point 3.1
Supporting point 1.3	Supporting point 2.3	Supporting point 3.3

Quick Contacts

Press Officer number:

Press Office email:

Message mapping keys

- **Less is more:** If not a core concept, don’t include it. Tendency is to include as many messages as possible.
- **Use rule of threes:**
 - 3 main points,
 - 3 supporting statements for each main point,
 - Generally repeat key messages 3 times for best retention & recall.
- **Audience first:** Keep key audience in mind when message mapping. What do they need to hear? What do they want to hear? What should they do?
- **Avoid extremes and negatives:** These maps are usually to share core information, clarify or motivate.

Effective messages have the following characteristics:

- **Anticipate challenges and opportunities-** Often the communication goal is to (1) share information, (2) persuade person(s) to do or think about a topic in a specific way, and/or (3) address errors, misconceptions or opportunities which may already exist. Issues could include strengths and weakness related to the topic, changes underway or those most needed, or a new concept which requires explanation. Listing issues and/or concerns first will ensure that messages achieve the desired outcomes. This process also will help determine whether there is a need to communicate to multiple audiences.
 - **Determine underlying issues-** Identified issues or comments may include related processes or dependencies. For example, there may be an institutional initiative linked to the topic to be communicated. Asking additional questions about underlying issues will further support credible messages, indicate additional audiences and/or stakeholders, and dictate whether communication on a given topic is timely.
 - **Develop key message(s)-** Work on this part with the end in mind: if the communication is successful, what should the audience be saying about the topic? It is best to have no more than three key points. Research shows that neither the speaker nor the listener will retain more than three key points. Each key message should be independent, but related under the SOCO. The first key message should be the strongest, most compelling statement. The third key message should provide a summation and/or call to action. The second point, the one least likely to be remembered, can promote a key attribute or address a secondary concern.
 - **Support the key message(s)-** The supporting points define and fill out the key message. Each key message should ideally have no more than three supporting points. Minimize jargon (if jargon is unavoidable, explain the meaning as part of the communication). Focus on language which is easily understood by the target audience. The supports should be unique pieces of information; this is a way to develop clear messages. If there is significant overlap between multiple supporting points, then the key message(s) may not be distinct and clear.
 - **Review/validate/revise messages-** Share the draft completed message map to get different perspectives. When developing the map alone or with knowledgeable partners, it is easy for jargon or generalized assumptions to slip in. Best to have someone who represents the intended audience review the proposed message map. Revise as necessary to ensure clarity of message and increase likelihood of achieving the intended outcome.
- **Clarity:** Clear messages contain as few technical terms as possible and eliminate information that the audience does not need to understand or respond to the message.
 - **Consistency:** Messages should attempt to convey consistent and accurate information. Messages which differ across an organization or through time, without explanation, are inconsistent and create confusion. Update messages as critical information changes. Link updates with past messages to ensure understanding.
 - **Main Points:** Main points should be stressed and repeated.
 - **Tone and Appeal:** Messages should convey the desired tone, to have intended impact on the target audience. For example, the tone could reassure, inspire, challenge, or be straightforward.
 - **Truthfulness:** Messages should be honest and should be as complete as possible; that is, you should say what you mean and mean what you say.
 - **Credibility:** Information should be believable and have a credible source, as determined by your audience research and expertise.
 - **Audience Relevance:** Messages should be based on what the target audience perceives as most important, what the audience wants to know (their perspective), and what the audience needs to know (your perspective).

Message Map template

Stakeholder:		
SOCO - Question or Concern or Intention (Headline):		
Key Message 1	Key Message 2	Key Message 3
Supporting Fact 1-1	Supporting Fact 2-1	Supporting Fact 3-1
Supporting Fact 1-2	Supporting Fact 2-2	Supporting Fact 3-2
Supporting Fact 1-3	Supporting Fact 2-3	Supporting Fact 3-3

Providing sound public affairs advice and counsel

...

January 17, 2018

How can we be effective in our role as advisers?

- Public affairs staff are responsible for advising senior leaders and subject matter experts on public affairs activities.
- Public affairs activities include key leader engagements (delivering remarks or representing the agency in official capacity at events); high-visibility or high-risk communication with stakeholder groups (media interview or press conference, response to RFIs from high-ranking stakeholders, remarks to regional workforce, etc.).
- When subject matter experts are engaging in public affairs activities, primarily media engagements, they rely on our expertise to deliver their subject matter knowledge in a manner appropriate for the audience.

Step 1: Establish public affairs posture

- Use **proactive** posture when it is necessary and/or desirable to communicate on a subject, to include actively soliciting for media and public attention. Example: Announcing contract award for the Alexandria Bay LPOE, which was 10 years in the making.
- Use **reactive** posture or “Response to Query” on topics where it is not necessary or desirable to communicate on a subject. RTQ means no direct effort is made to initiate, or participate in, the public discussion about the issue. RTQ requires being prepared to respond to news media, public and congressional inquiries about the issue and consider making brief statements to avoid confusion, speculation, misunderstanding, or false information that may prevail if news media queries go unanswered. Example: Announcing lease contract award for space to support USSS in their mission to protect POTUS, VPOTUS, et al.

Step 2: Develop potential Qs and As

- Develop five questions you want to get, five questions you don't want to get, and five questions you know you're going to get.
- On questions you want to get, develop answers that incorporate themes and messages from campaign strategy.
- On questions you don't want to get, provide succinct response only answering specifically what the reporter asked.
- On questions you know you're going to get, focus on having facts fully checked and memorized (5 W's). They are almost always going to get, "Is there anything else you'd like to add?" The answer is always, "Yes!" Then the SME can deliver the themes and messages that haven't yet worked into the interview.

Step 3: Ask the SME to validate the As; offer prep session

- Most SMEs and senior officials will not review public affairs guidance thoroughly, so a prep session provides opportunity to review the guidance in person.
- It's up to the SME whether or not they accept the prep session offer -- it's up to you to make the session an appealing offer to accept.
- Schedule 30-45 minutes about one to two days prior to the engagement. Offer to give desk-side prep to outline what they can expect and help them rehearse the tough Qs and As.
- Provide finalized PAG as read ahead for the session at least 24 hours prior

Step 4: Prep session

- Start by explaining what you think the angle of the story is and what sort of media outlet the reporter works for. Let the SME know we aim for an accurate, balanced story; a positive story is icing on the cake.
- If the reporter is a print journalist, let them know the answers can be more descriptive but still avoid rambling.
- If the reporter is a TV journalist, try to get them to deliver complete sound bites within 8 seconds time. Let them know whether or not it's a live shot, and if they can restart their response if they stammer or ramble.
- Tell them the mechanics they can expect.
- Once you have covered the PAG verbally with them, ask if they are willing to roleplay a few of the questions. If they say yes, give them a softball questions until their confidence is up, and then try the more challenging ones.

Step 5: Coaching and support

- Encourage them when they deliver answers that are accurate. Don't add stress by asking them to deliver the talking points you provided verbatim. If the answers they give are not accurate, make an on-the-spot correct. If the answers they give just aren't as polished as you'd like or aren't incorporating the themes and messages well, try to say, "That was good. Even better would be to end that answer with a statement like, 'GSA's top priority is to deliver the best value to government and the American people.'"
- If they are stuck on a difficult question, demonstrate a bridging technique.
- Make sure the session offers equal parts of them being in receive mode and actively rehearsing.

Examples of effective talking points

- “With our region fully engaged in response to Hurricane Maria, we respectfully decline the opportunity for an interview. I’ll let you know if the situation changes.”
- “GSA cannot release details due to procurement and security concerns.”
- “To maintain the integrity of the investigation, GSA cannot provide details but we can assure you that we are cooperating fully with authorities.”
- “GSA does not comment on pending litigation.”
- “GSA and our partners appreciate your support of this vital project.”

Additional resources

- Defense Information School's instruction on PPAG:
https://dinfos.blackboard.com/bbcswebdav/xid-397243_5 (download)
- Proposed Public Affairs Guidance format:
<https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/policy/army/fm/3-61-1/appe.htm>

Talking with the Media

*What To Say and How
To Say It*

Stephanie Kenitzer, PSHC Community Manager

Chad Hutson, Regional Public Affairs Officer

February 2018

<http://vimeo.com/32207413>



Why Media Training?



What Can You Expect?

- Increase **YOUR** understanding of the media.
 - **Increase YOUR** comfort level in working with the media.
 - Give you a few **tips and tricks!**
-

Notable Quotes

*“It is always a risk to speak to the press:
They are likely to report what you
say.”*

- Hubert H. Humphrey

The Media



News Media Trends

- Big events get the spotlight
- Post-event story lines are ignored or quickly dropped
- Cable news, talk radio seize polarizing stories and amplify them
- Reporting resources continue to shrink
- Social media often drives the news

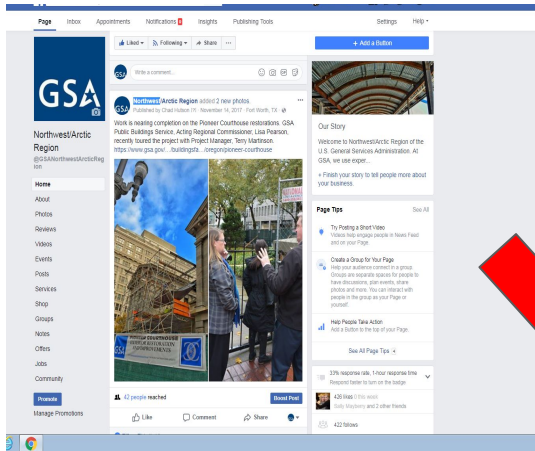
NUANCES

- Print
 - Television
 - Radio
 - Trade
 - Online
-

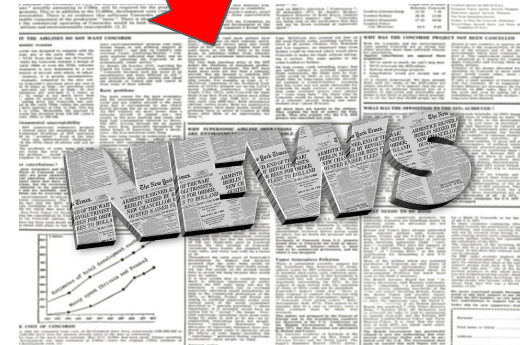
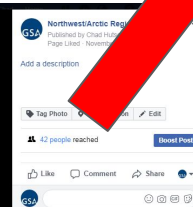
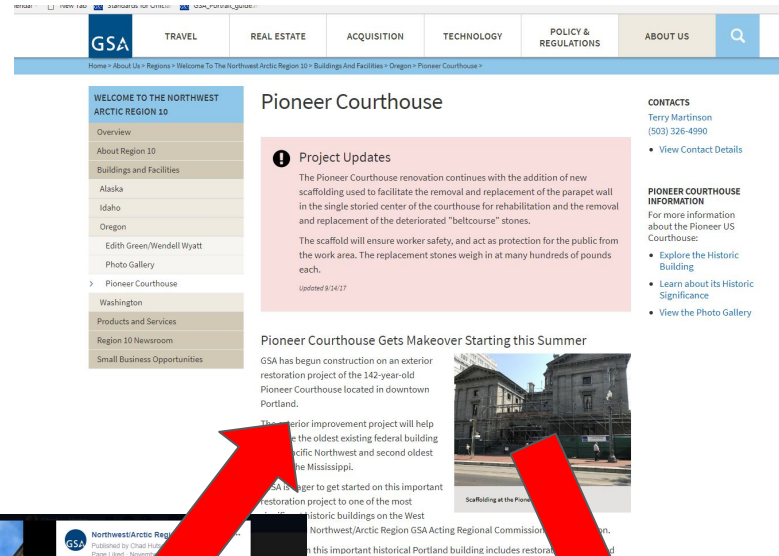
Social Media



Social Media



GSA Visitor to Facebook



Today's Reporter...

- Has a job to perform, just like you
- Has to tell a timely and interesting story
- Does not fully understand your business
- Needs conflict or controversy to fuel the story
- Is focused on his/her story. If you aren't focused, they will be in control!

Why Work With the Media?

- A chance to tell our story
- Our audience listens, watches, engages with media
- Media coverage impacts budgets
- Builds agency brand & good stories boost employee morale



Reporters in the Room

- When accepting speaking engagements ask if it is open to media
 - Talk to the primary audience but be aware of media
 - Don't give interviews on the fly - schedule in advance or later
 - You are never off the record
-

The Art of the Interview

What Makes a Good News Story?

- Anecdotes and stories!
 - Something unusual
 - Unexpected (man bites dog)
 - First of its kind
 - Ground-breaking (new process for doing something/
saving taxpayer dollars)
 - Part of a trend (i.e. anything sustainable, using
technology to speed up a process, replacing fuel
powered cars with electric ones, etc.)
 - Topical (part of on already on-going news
story: Elections, Olympics, etc.)
-

What Reporters Need

- Before deadline
- Honest facts
- Timely numbers
- Quotes from credible sources
- Plain English, 7th-grade explanations. *No acronyms!*
- TV—visuals



What to Know in Advance

Public Affairs/Office of Strategic Communications will help you with the prep. Info we gather includes:

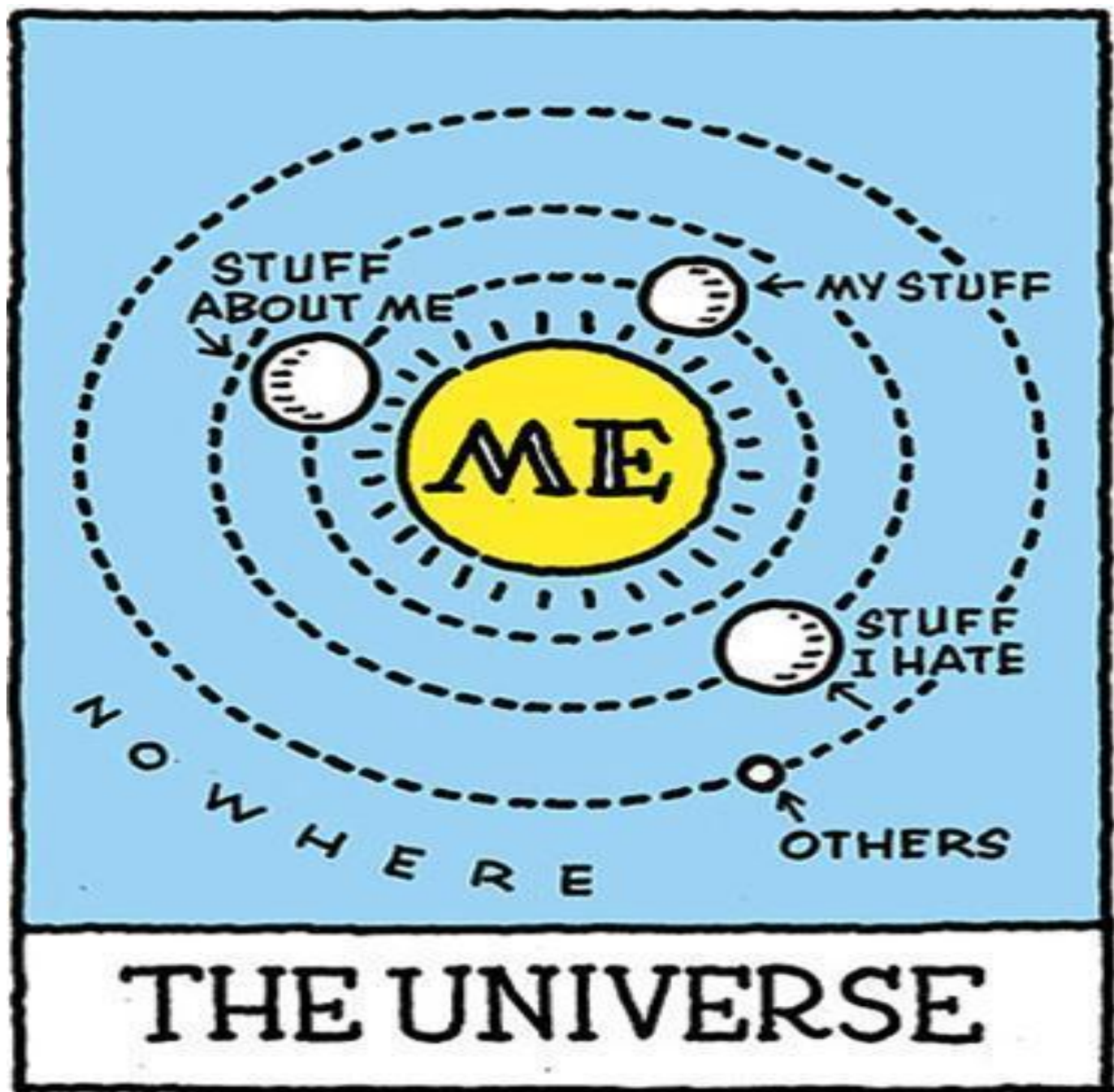
- What type of interview is it?
- Who is the reporter?
- Who is the ultimate audience?
- Is it taped or live?
- Who else is being interviewed?
- What's deadline?
- What's topic or angle?

Developing Key Messages

- What's the issue?
- What does your audience want?
- What does the media need?
- What story do you want to tell?
- Follow-on questions?

Note: Public Affairs/Office of Strategic Communications has the lead with expertise





Message Points

- The points you most want the audience to remember
- The foundation for each answer you provide
- Think headlines: Conclusion first, followed by supporting facts
- “GSA is committed to providing federal agencies cost saving solutions that also provide savings to the taxpayer.”
 - A)
 - B)
 - C)

PLAN

- General Statement

-
- Data/Facts

-
- Example
-

“Know what you want to say and use whatever questions you are asked to say it. Briefly, along the way, you can actually address the questions put to you or not, as you choose.... Just don’t get so fixated by the questions you are asked that you forget to make your points.”

MacNeil’s Motto
MacNeil/Lehrer NewsHour



The Ever Shrinking Soundbite

Words		
Words		
Words		
Words		
Words	Words	
Words	Words	
Words	Words	Word
Words	Words	Word
1968 – 42.3 Seconds	1988 - 9.8 Seconds	Today– 7.3 Seconds

Source: Center for Media and Public Affairs

27 / 9 / 3

27 words

9 seconds

3 messages

Word Choice

- Simple but not simplistic
 - Direct and honest
 - Be careful of GSA jargon (acronyms)
 - Use words and phrases people will remember
-

Now What?

- Put it in writing – bullets or outline
- Do not script and memorize
- Practice speaking out loud
- During practice, incorporate your visuals to ensure the proper order

Tips and Pointers

Communicating the Message

Word Choice

Voice Tone

Body Language

Communicating the Message

Word Choice – 7%

Voice Tone – 38%

Body Language – 55%

IT'S WHAT YOU **DON'T SAY** THAT COUNTS!



Blocking/Bridging

- **What is blocking/bridging/flagging?**
 - The use of smooth connecting phrases to move the conversation from an unproductive, hostile, or irrelevant area back to your message points
 - Staying on track
 - Bridging
 - Flagging
 - Useful phrases
-

Bridging Samples

- “What’s most important to know is...”
 - “However, what is more important to look at is...”
 - “What this all means is...”
 - “What’s most important to remember is ...”
 - “With this in mind, if we look at the bigger picture...”
 - “With this in mind, if we take a look back...”
 - “If we take a broader perspective, ...”
 - “If we look at the big picture...”
 - “Let me put all this in perspective by saying...”
 - “Before we continue, let me emphasize that...”
-

Bridging Samples

- “This is an important point because...”
 - “The heart of the matter is...”
 - “What matters most in this situation is...”
 - “Let me just add to this that...”
 - “Let me emphasize again...”
 - “Another thing to remember is...”
 - “Before we leave the subject, let me add that...”
 - “And that reminds me...”
 - “Here’s the real issue...”
 - “While...is important, it is also important to remember...”
-

Common Questions

- **“Where do I look?”**
 - **“Where do I stand?”**
 - **“What do I do with my hands?”**
-

Common Pitfalls



Nevers

- Never go “off the record”
 - Never say, “No comment”
 - Never guess
 - Never ad lib
 - Never lie
 - Never argue
 - Never be flippant/Joke
 - Comment about a reporter
-

How Can We Help?

- Experienced media professional
- Provide research/support
- Manage interview/reporter expectations
- Set you up for a successful interview

Contacts

Stephanie Kenitzer

PSHC Community Manager

stephanie.kenitzer@gsa.gov

253-931-7873

Chad Hutson

Regional Public Affairs Officer

chad.hutson@gsa.gov

253-931-



GSA InSite	Agency Topics	Organization	Directory	PBS	FAS	Directives	Region 9	
HOME	ABOUT R9	ACQUISITION & FINANCE	AGENCY/REGIONAL INITIATIVES	BUILDINGS & REAL ESTATE	FOR EMPLOYEES	MEASURES & BENCHMARKS	NEWS & EVENTS	REFERENCES & RESOURCES

Region 9 InSite > About R9 > Communications >

About R9**Overview****Office Locations & Information****Important Numbers****Regional Administrator****Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)****Federal Acquisition Service (FAS)****Human Resources****Public Buildings Service (PBS)****Communications****Contacts**▶ **Public Affairs****Regional Counsel****Small Business Utilization****Org Charts****GSA IT****Leadership Team****Mission Assurance****Workplace Services**

Public Affairs

The Public Affairs Officer (PAO) plans and directs public relations programs designed to create and maintain a favorable public image for GSA. He also works with regional staff to determine target audiences and the best ways to communicate with them.

Duties Include:

- Establishing and managing effective relationships with reporters and media opinion influencers
- Providing communications counsel to all levels of GSA
- Planning and executing the Region's overall media relations strategy which includes press and community outreach, media events and interview, and the development of press materials and communications plans

Not sure when to contact your PAO?

Anytime! however some triggers might be:

- When contacted by a member of the press
- First of its kind (new process for doing something/saving taxpayer dollars)
- Part of a trend (anything sustainable, using technology to speed up a process, replacing fuel powered cars with electric ones, etc.)
- Project milestones (groundbreakings, dedications, contract awards, etc.)
- Significant issues or challenges that could go public
- Situations that impact or require coordination with the community

Working with your PAO will help increase your understanding of the media and how GSA interacts with members of the press to promote the agency's accomplishments.

Remember, all media inquiries should be directed to Andra Higgs at (415) 436-8778 or andra.higgs@gsa.gov. He will collaborate with you to ensure consistency of voice and message relevancy.

CONTACTS

Andra Patrice Higgs
(415) 436-8778

- andra.higgs@gsa.gov
- [View Contact Details](#)

Last Reviewed 2017-03-20



U.S. General Services Administration

Office of Strategic Communication

New Employee Orientation



Communications Team Members



Traci Madison
Communications Manager



Christi Chidester Votisek
Communications
Specialist



Javier Fernandez**
Communications
Specialist



Jessica Glavin
Communications
Specialist



Andra Higgs
Public Affairs Officer



Drew Jack**
Communications
Specialist



Scott Nielsen
Communications
Specialist

Public Affairs

R9's Public Affairs Officer plans and directs public relations programs designed to create and maintain a favorable public image for GSA.

- Establishes effective relationships with reporters and media outlets
- Provides communication advice to R9 team; helps determine the best communication strategies and messaging

When to contact your PAO:

- Anytime!
- When contacted by a member of the press
- Events or good news (groundbreaking, dedication, contract award, etc.)
- Significant issues or challenges that could go public

Internal Communications

➤ Email Distribution

➤ Chatter

- R9 - Pacific Rim Region
- FAS Region 9
- 50 UNP Hub

➤ R9 InSite (internal only web portal)

➤ Employee Newsletter (Pacific Rim Breeze)



R9 Info Regional Communications

Region 9

Last week, GSA's Acting Administrator Denise Turner Roth announced that the Pacific Rim Region will be getting a new Regional Administrator (RA) later this month. Andrew McMahon will be joining our stellar R9 team on Monday, May 18th. Andrew's experiences working at GSA, as the Administrator's Senior Advisory for Technology as well as his stint at the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), give him the broad perspective needed to successfully manage the range of projects and issues that affect the Pacific Rim Region. I welcome Andrew to the leadership team, and I look forward to working with him in his new role.

I would also like to announce another change to our regional leadership team happening next week. Alex Randolph, Special Assistant to the RA, will be departing GSA on May 13th. San Francisco Mayor Edwin Lee recently appointed Alex to the City College of San Francisco board of trustees during a press conference at City Hall. As a member of the board, Alex not only brings a wealth of experience to the college at a critical time, he will also serve as a voice for students and a strong advocate for equal access to educational opportunities. Alex has been a tremendous asset to Region 9 and he will be greatly missed. I thank Alex for his dedication, his wise counsel, and all his efforts as our liaison with members of Congress. Please join me in wishing him well during his last week with the agency.



GSA Region 9

Search This Site

Region 9 @ All InSites

Home | Agency Topics | Organization | Directory | PBS | FAS | Directories | Region 9

Quick Directory

Last Name:

First Name:

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Tools

- ALORA (leave requests)
- BookIt! (room scheduling)
- CHRS (personnel files)
- Concur (GCE) (travel reservations)
- Employees Express (payroll)
- EDSpeak (time & attendance)
- Enterprise (financial & HR apps)
- GCMS (update contact info)
- GSA Meeting Space (virtual meetings)
- InSite Video Broadcasts (live streams)
- IT Service Desk (IT self service)

Resources

- 50 UNP Travel Handbook
- Acquisition Portal
- BRAVO (employee recognition)
- Directives (RS)
- eCards
- Forms
- GSA Job Openings

ASIAN AMERICAN & PACIFIC ISLANDER HERITAGE MONTH MAY 2015

May is Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month. This month, we celebrate the achievements and contributions of Asian Americans, Pacific Islanders, Native Hawaiians, and others of Asian or Pacific Islander descent. Learn more >

INSITE FEATURE: National Small Business Week

GSA Rallying to Exceed Agency Small Business Contracting Goals

Just in time for National Small Business Week, GSA is launching a new Small Business First Campaign aimed at helping the agency to exceed this year's small business contracting goals.

May 4, 2015

FOR EMPLOYEES: Employee Viewpoint Survey

Federal Government's One and Only Employee Satisfaction Survey

Many of you will receive an invitation from OPM to participate in the Employee Viewpoint Survey. Please share your feedback.

Region 9 Social Media

Region 9 Twitter Feed

Traci Madison: Have you been hearing about SGE (Service Delivery Excellence), but you're not quite sure what it's all about?

May 19, 2015 10:12 PM EDT

Traci Madison: National Small Business Week starts this week May 18-20th, 2015. Our GSA, Region 9 Office of Small Business.

May 19, 2015 10:50 AM EDT

Florence Francis, Diner Jack, and Traci Madison (See this)

Traci Madison: PBS would like to announce the following profiles: Supervisory Contract Specialist, GS-1102-13 in San Francisco.

May 04, 2015 10:11 PM EDT

Charles Lee: Acquisition Gateway e-Biz Open just finished exploring one of the latest offerings in the Acquisition Gateway.

May 04, 2015 11:37 PM EDT

Traci Madison and Diner Jack (See this)

Jessica Glavin: GS UNP's first blog! Your OIG is back. Please visit a recent earnings call.

External Communications

- **GSA.gov/r9** is the primary external engagement channel with an average of 8,000 unique visits per month; our regional overview and San Ysidro LPOE microsite are consistently the top viewed pages
- **Tenant Newsletters**
- **Social Media**
 - **Facebook** (U.S. General Services Administration Pacific Rim Region)
 - **Twitter** (@US_GSAR9)
 - **YouTube**

LPOE Communications

- Develops Land Port of Entry (LPOE) communication materials
 - Project fact sheets, webpage, social media, presentations
 - Ex. San Ysidro PedWest communication campaign; video garnered almost 10K views
- Coordinates and collaborates with internal/external stakeholders
 - Federal, state, and local community leaders
- Assists with community stakeholder outreach
 - Government liaison/community meetings, port tours, and small business outreach events



Events

R9 Comms plans and coordinates milestone events and ceremonies within the Pacific Rim Region.

Recent Ceremonies

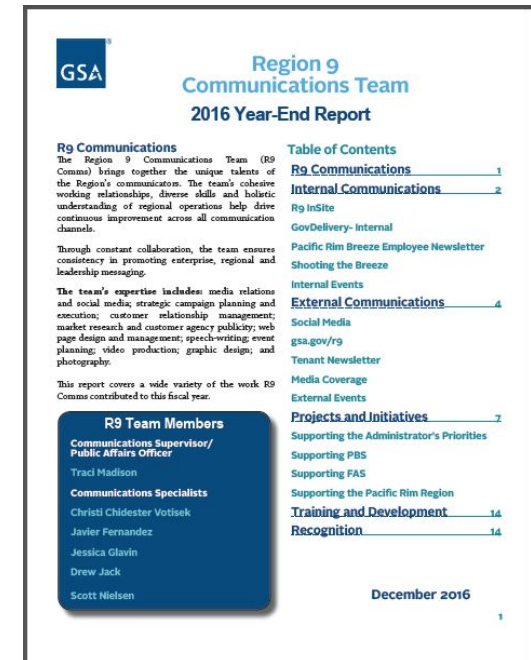
- Calexico LPOE Groundbreaking
- San Ysidro LPOE PedWest Ribbon Cutting
- Los Angeles Courthouse Ribbon Cutting

Upcoming Ceremonies

R9 Communications Plans

R9 Comms develops two strategic planning documents annually:

- FY Communication Plan
 - Incorporates feedback from leadership team
 - Identifies priorities, goals and specific tactics planned
- End of Year Report
 - Highlights communication accomplishments across all internal and external platforms
 - Serves as baseline for next year's planning





February Breeze - Are you keeping up with what's going on?

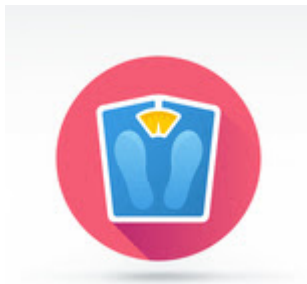
1 message

R9 Communications <R9Communications@notify.gsa.gov>
Reply-To: R9Communications@notify.gsa.gov

Wed, Feb 7, 2018 at 8:33 AM



News You Can Use



Healthy Weight, Healthy Life Challenge

Join FedStrive's five week wellness challenge designed to promote healthy weight through healthy lifestyle choices using interactive workshops focusing on changing your behaviors, food choices and hydration, physical activity, and more. February 5 to March 9. [Click here to register and find out more >](#)



Conflicts of Interest and OGE 450s

Dear Colleagues,

As you may be aware, employees in certain positions have been notified

that they are required to submit a Confidential Financial Disclosure Report (Office of Government Ethics (OGE) Form 450) to the agency every year. This process is important because it helps ensure that we, as public servants, act with impartiality in our official duties.

There are several statutory and regulatory authorities that concern conflicting financial interests and the requirement that federal employees act impartially. Of particular importance is a criminal statute, 18 United States Code (U.S.C.) Section (§) 208, which requires an employee to be disqualified ("recused") from a particular matter if it would have a direct and predictable effect on the employee's own financial interests or on certain financial interests that are treated as the employee's own, such as those of the employee's spouse or a prospective employer.

There are a number of ways to deal with a financial conflict of interest under 18 U.S.C. § 208. First, an exemption may apply. The Office of Government Ethics has exempted certain financial interests that are too remote or too inconsequential to affect the integrity of an employee's



When should you contact your public affairs officer (PAO)?

If you're contacted by any media representative about a GSA-related matter; if you have something interesting to share with the region; or if you have a concern that something will get media attention, contact the R9 PAO Andra Higgs via email or phone (415) 436-8778. Click here to find out more >



African American History Month

February is celebrated as African American History Month. This year's theme is "African Americans in Times of War". To learn more about this celebration and the contributions of African Americans in our nation's history, check out the [website here >](#)

service to the government. Second, if an exemption does not apply, the employee may be recused from the matter. Third, if recusal is not possible and the employee's financial interest poses a "substantial conflict," the employee may be directed to sell the stock or other conflicting property. Finally, and in very limited circumstances, the employee may be able to deal with the conflict by establishing a qualified trust that is certified by OGE.

If you have questions about your OGE Form 450 or about how the conflict of interest laws apply to you, please contact me to schedule an appointment. I can be reached via email at keaton.norquist@gsa.gov, or by phone at 415-436-8739.

Thank you,

Keaton Norquist, Assistant Regional Counsel

Region 9 News

- [Online Challenge Yields New Ideas, Discussion about SF Plaza](#)
- [New U.S. Courthouse in Los Angeles Receives Prestigious Architectural Award](#)
- [Shooting the Breeze with Xitlaly Aranda](#)
- [R9 FAS Employee Supports FEMA Hurricane Relief Efforts](#)

Upcoming Training

February 14 - Enhancing Your Life with Positive Thinking. Join this live Employee Assistance Program (EAP) webinar to learn the dos and don'ts of common thought patterns, positive self-talk, shifting your mood, and how to practice gratitude. 10-11 a.m. PST [Click here to register >](#)

March 6-8 -The San Francisco Bay Area Federal Executive Board invites you to attend [three days of professional development with Ken Lodi](#). His programs are high energy, rich in content, and very interactive. All classes take place at the San Francisco Federal Building, 90 7th St., San Francisco, CA. To register, call (323)-833-9933 or email [Ken Lodi Communications >](#)



You may have noticed that Google Calendar has a new look. This February, the **new interface** will become permanent. You can switch to the new calendar now by clicking the "Use new Calendar" button within Google Calendar. You can **register for our live demo** on February 15 at 10 a.m. PST to learn more.

- **March 6** - The Bamboo Principle. Participants learn to identify, develop and deliver their talents in this live workshop. Gain a deeper understanding about yourself, your talents, and the work assignments where you thrive and feel truly gratified. The Bamboo Development Model™ enables you to make the leap from good to great, and complete the class with a detailed personal development plan. 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m. PST.
- **March 7** - Front & Center. Learn to organize your thoughts for meetings, webinars, and presentations and the process which build confidence. 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m. PST.
- **March 8** - Performance Coaching & Mentoring. Coaching is a collaboration that generates ideas, provides clarity and direction, and holds people accountable for implementing solutions for progress. Learn how to advise and to provide effective coaching techniques. 8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. PST.



FAS Deputy Commissioner Mary Davie and TTS Commissioner Joanne Collins-Smee answered questions at a brown bag luncheon on January 31 at [50 United Nations Plaza](#) in San Francisco.

Save the Dates

February 21 - African American History Month (AAHM) Celebration. All are welcome to join the celebration at [450 Golden Gate, San Francisco, CA, 19th floor](#) ceremonial courtroom. more info to follow. Find out more about AAHM by [clicking here >](#)

February 21 - Warning Signs of Heart Attack or Stroke. Learn the warning signs, how you can act fast to increase someone's chance of surviving, and tips for prevention in this Federal Occupational Health live webinar. 10-10:30 a.m. PST. [Click here to register >](#)

February 27 - Dealing with Challenging Interactions and Value of Mindfulness. Learn valuable skills in both seminars on improving your interactions with people and being present in the moments of everyday life. The use of mindfulness meditation is also discussed. 10 a.m. -12 p.m. PST. San Francisco Federal Building, [90 7th St. Room B-040](#). [Click here to register >](#)

Welcome New Employee!

- **Colby Cone**, Equipment Specialist, Office of Fleet Management, FAS, Santa Barbara, CA.



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Subject: New Contacts for Media Inquiries

R4 Public Buildings Service recently partnered with the R4 Communications Team and will be assisting with media relations while the position is vacant. PBS associates Jennifer Suggs and Elizabeth Andrews will work closely with the communication team to promote the Region's accomplishments and respond to media inquiries.

Please contact Jennifer Suggs at (404) 433-8407 or jennifer.suggs@gsa.gov and/or Elizabeth Andrews at (404) 331-0862 or elizabeth.andrews@gsa.gov when:

- contacted by a member of the press;
- project milestones are on the horizon (groundbreakings, dedications, contract awards, etc.);
- significant issues or challenges arise that could go public;
- first of its kind (new process for doing something/saving taxpayer dollars); and
- situations impact or require coordination with the community

They will collaborate with you to ensure consistency of voice and message relevancy.